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POLITICAL SONGS

ON

OUR WORKINGMEN'S  
WRONGS

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BY CHARLES TRENCH

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IMPERIALISM  
PROTECTIVE TARIFFS  
TRUSTS  
THE NEW DEMOCRACY  
THE GROANS OF COLUMBIA  
GOD'S DESERT AND MAMMON'S DESERT  
OUR WORKINGMEN  
THE CORPORATION BOARDING-HOUSE KEEPER

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BY CHARLES TRENCH  
BOSTON, MASS.





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## IMPERIALISM.

I wish I had a critic's pen  
To stigmatize those venal men  
Who, safe from danger, launch from far  
The dreadful thunder bolts of war,  
And with a callous unconcern  
Despatch commands to shell and burn  
The homes of people, late our friends,  
For purely profit-making ends.

Responsive to the cannon's roar  
Late thriving towns are drenched in gore ;  
Infirm old men and women feel  
Consuming flames and murd'ring steel.  
Their homes destroyed and parents dead,  
Deserted children cry for bread.  
Deep woes, 'tis not in words to tell,  
Announce a savage reign of Hell.

And what is all this havoc for?  
'Tis nothing but a needless war,  
For grasping Trusts whose harpy hands  
Are reaching out for distant lands,  
Where many products which are known  
To tropic climes are cheaply grown ;  
Besides, these despots have in view  
Cheap Asiatic labor, too,

Our dull officials also try  
 To turn aside the public eye,  
 And thus divert attention from  
 Their infamous misrule at home ;  
 This is the way affairs are run,  
 My working friends, in Washington ;  
 With millions weekly thrown away,  
 Which you will surely have to pay..

Ye citizens ! behold the shame  
     Of this gigantic bunco game.  
 Your duty is to stop supplies  
     For this unrighteous enterprise,  
 Which has no other end in view  
 Than sharking for a wealthy few.  
 One chief, by orders, gags the Press,  
 And other tools the Mails repress.  
 If thus our rights are trampled on,  
 Our freedom soon will all be gone.  
 What fouler wrongs upon this earth  
 Can call your keen resentment forth ?  
 Then rally, without loss of time,  
 And check this carnival of crime.

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### PROTECTIVE TARIFFS.

Contempt of human rights has been  
     A foe to Liberty,  
 Involving in all ages men  
     In chains and slavery,  
 His mental vision must be short,  
 Who fails to comprehend the sort.  
 Of rights Republicans support.

Beneath their rule our wealth has passed  
 Into the hands of few,  
 And Tariff laws have tended fast  
 Wage earners to subdue  
 To needy surfs, with want so rife,  
 That labor is a constant strife  
 To earn the scantest needs of life.

Oh ! founder of your system, look  
 At this enormus sin ;  
 But hearts, moored in a narrow nook,  
 Can scarcely take it in ;  
 And how can Fancy find a name  
 To brand thee with eternal shame  
 For planning this disgraceful scheme.

For, travel Earth's wide region round,  
 And vain would be the quest  
 To find a land within its bound  
 By taxes more oppressed.  
 Our tariffs are so well design'd  
 To fleece the poor, no fiend could find  
 A baser swindle for mankind.

A shameful, though instructive sight,  
 Was that great throng which went  
 To Congress, like a vultures flight,  
 On spoliation bent ;  
 And while you framed your Tariff Bill,  
 These harpies struggled with a will,  
 Like swine around a trough of swill.



The plea Protectionists employ,  
 Resentment to allay,  
 Is that by tariffs men enjoy  
 A higher rate of pay.  
 But, where Protection's hand is laid,  
 As Henry George has truly said,  
 The lowest wage is always paid.

The wily tariff-tinker states  
 That industries abroad  
 Are strangled by our tariff rates,  
 But mentions not a word  
 About the paupers who appear  
 From foreign shores, from year to year,  
 And keep down labors' wages here.

You see my friends upon inspection  
 The crafty game that's played ;  
 While corporations have protection,  
 Vast crowds our shores invade  
 All free of any tax and so,  
 Our labor markets overflow,  
 And keep the rate of wages low.

This illustration shows the way  
 That Corporations trade :  
 Ten dollars I, the other day,  
 For woolen blankets paid ;  
 Yet six are charged for that same brand  
 When shipped to any foreign land.  
 'Tis easy now to understand

Why strikes prevail and riot reigns,  
 And millions are oppressed,  
 For labor, of its hard-earned gains,  
 By Law is dispossessed.  
 In all our towns are heard the groans  
 Of workingmen, whose flesh and bones  
 Are worn out by rapacious drones.

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## TRUSTS.

We often proudly boast that we  
 Have long dispensed with Kings,  
 But still we have to bend the knee  
 To Trusts, Combines and Rings.  
 In every workman's home and trade,  
 Their hateful webs and traps are laid  
 To plunder, beggar and degrade.

No feudal barons ever swayed  
 Their serfs with heavier hand  
 Than that which grasping Trusts have laid  
 On this tax-ridden land.  
 Of all the wrongs mankind have cursed,  
 Or foul corruption yet has nursed,  
 These leagues for plunder are the worst.

Blackmail, in ancient times, we know  
 Was levied by brute-force,  
 But now we workers undergo  
 Despoilment that is worse ;  
 For Trusts, with boundless pelf supplied,  
 Have all our feeble laws defied,  
 And on our backs securely ride.

Self-conscious rogues deserve respect  
 Compared to sharpers who  
 So many industries have wrecked,  
 And honest workman, too.  
 Ye voters ! clearly understand,  
 A duty waits you, a demand  
 To lay on Trusts a heavy hand.

This question now demands reply,  
 Shall men or money rule ?  
 Shall state affairs be guided by  
 A Trust-appointed tool ?  
 If so, 'tis easy to forecast  
 Disruption and upheaval vast,  
 Unparalleled in ages past.

---

## THE NEW DEMOCRACY.

It is a truth we can't deny  
 That poverty increases,  
 That famished beggars multiply  
 And Labor's pay decreases ;  
 The reason's plain enough to see,  
 It is, my working friends, that we  
 Are plundered by monopoly.

Trusts, Syndicates, Combines and Pools  
 Have closed to trade our ports,  
 And by the use of pelf make tools  
 Of Council-halls and Courts,  
 Corruption's reached to such a pitch,  
 That laws are not permitted which  
 Can touch the pockets of the rich.

Of all the symptoms of a heart  
     Corrupted to the core,  
 The surest is the griping art  
     Of pilfering the poor.  
 Our Congress halls are all beset  
 With greedy Trusts, whose eyes are set  
 To get the poor within their net.

Resistance in a legal way  
     To fraud and imposition,  
 Becomes a higher law today  
     Than timorous submission.  
 The grin-and-bear-it policy,  
 With daring greed and villiany,  
 Is base and abject slavery.

Foul hovels of polluted air  
     Is now the toilers lot ;  
 With crafty grabbers, here and there,  
     No refuge he has got.  
 He wears these galling chains because  
 Republicans make venal laws  
 For filling never-sated maws.

No man who casts a vote should blink  
     This all-important fact,  
 'Tis always how a man can think  
     That urges him to act.  
 One thinker, with a truth imprest,  
 Is worth ten thousand who're possessed  
 Of only selfish interest.



Resolve at this momentuous hour,  
     If freedom warms your breast,  
 To overthrow a venal power  
     Which freemen should detest  
 To be contented and resigned  
 To despots, who oppress mankind,  
 Betrays a weak and craven mind.

---

## THE GROANS OF COLUMBIA.

We hold in this unrivalled land  
     Resources which are vast,  
 Where Nature with unsparing hand  
     Yields treasures unsurpassed ;  
 Its climate admirably suits  
 The growth of cereals and roots,  
 And orchards bend with fairest fruits.

A richer country there is none  
     Upon the face of Earth,  
 Nor is there one beneath the sun  
     That pours such treasures forth ;  
 Its Government formed on a plan  
 Adapted to the needs of man,  
 In Freedom's march once led the van.

But what a change has taken hold  
     Of our beloved land,  
 Since fraud-accumulated gold  
     Has taken it in hand !  
 Although we claim and boast that we—  
 The people—are self-ruled and free,  
 Where can be found more tyranny ?

Our working people ask the cause  
     Of such a state of things,  
 The answer is that grinding laws  
     Are made by Trusts and Rings,  
 Who, though they hoards on hoards secure,  
 By pilfering the toiling poor,  
 Yet boldly plot and scheme for more.

Alarming truths are coming home,  
     And thoughtful people see  
 That radical reforms must come  
     Or frightful anarchy.  
 The masses feel the spoilers' fangs  
 And clearly see their freedom hangs  
 On rooting out rapacious gangs.

You must attend, oh, Citizen !  
     To these important matters ;  
 No wonder that so many men  
     Are clad like tramps in tatters.  
 Great Kingdoms torn up branch and roots  
 Have often been the bitter fruits  
 Of crushing men below the brutes.

Our dangers every day increase,  
     The tide of sin runs deep,  
 So hang your fiddles up and cease  
     To sing yourselves to sleep.  
 Grim omens here and there forbode  
 That Retribution's on the road  
 And may at any time explode.

Your duty is to overthrow  
 The Party now in power,  
 For that important step is now  
 The question of the hour.  
 Remember, its dishonest lines  
 Run solely with great Trusts, Combines,  
 And owners of enormous mines.

---

## GOD'S DESERT AND MAMMON'S DESERT.

God's desert blooms with smiling flowers  
 Which waft the breath of incense round,  
 While blossoms fall in fragrant showers  
 And lovely scenes and forms abound ;  
 All nature seems to bloom and shine  
 Beneath a flood of light divine.

A thousand mirthful songs arise  
 From murmuring insect, bee and bird,  
 And by the zephyrs' scented sighs  
 The trees to melody are stirred ;  
 Green slopes, clear rills and waving wood  
 Create a blissful solitude.

The thrush and sweet-toned robin sing  
 Their joyous songs among the trees,  
 And streams of balmy perfume spring  
 From every leaf that courts the breeze ;  
 Along the valley's green expanse  
 The plummy ferns with gladness dance.

Here countless beasts and birds resort  
 With food abundant, and are free  
 And happy in their work or sport  
 As God intended them to be ;  
 No human sharks are here to rob,  
 Or toilers begging for a job.

But we have reached our journey's end,  
 Have had a glimpse of God's domains,  
 And now will contemplate, my friend  
 A wilderness where Mammon reigns.  
 A woful change ! Here mortals dwell  
 Beneath his foul and baleful spell.

Yes ! human wrecks in shoals we see,  
 Of every boon of life denied ;  
 All Mammons' victims, doomed to be  
 Despoiled, debased and brutified ;  
 Their frames worn out to barely win  
 Enough to keep their souls within.

Here sloughs of reeking filth you meet,  
 From whence foul smells invade your nose,  
 In every alley, lane and street  
 Revolting objects flock like crows,  
 While squalid toilers of all ages,  
 Contend for less than living wages.

Such is the lot of men who feed  
 And clothe mankind. While Mammon feasts,  
 Their lives are spent in hopeless need,  
 Degraded far below the beasts,  
 And thus we trace from place to place  
 The Tyrant of Columbia's race.



## OUR WORKING MEN.

O Knowledge ! thou directing light,  
 Instruct the toiling masses,  
 And teach them to maintain their right  
 Against oppressive classes ;  
 Without thy aid the ballot-box  
 Is but a snare, and crafty hoax,  
 To keep us under galling yokes.

Our workmen are the best on Earth,  
 And toil the longest hours,  
 But yet there is a grievous dearth  
 Among these men of ours  
 Of comforts, which to them are due,  
 By virtue of the work they do  
 To swell the pockets of the few.

While honest pay means happiness  
 And cheerful self-respect,  
 Scant wages lead to wretchedness,  
 Vice, squallor and neglect.  
 Remember, oh, ye voters ! these  
 Are deadly germs of that disease  
 Which ends in woeful tragedies.

Keen wrongs without a remedy  
 Are fortunately few,  
 And reason shows the path which we  
 At present must pursue.  
 When grasping Trusts and Rings abound,  
 The sons of Labor should be found  
 United on one common ground.

And, furthermore, don't fail to see  
 That oft-repeated cant  
 Of Demagogues, who say you're free  
 While you're oppressed with want.  
 Twist phrases as they may, 'tis plain  
 That Freedom is but void and vain  
 Which brings not plenty in her train.

Ye, toilers, look this matter through,  
 And if you mean to cope  
 With craft and fraud, cease clinging to  
 Deceitful straws of hope.  
 Republicans will always make  
 As many pledges as you'll take,  
 But all of which they mean to break.

Then organize, Be this command  
 Obeyed by every one  
 Whose bread is by a toil-worn hand  
 From leagued oppression won.  
 If ye like sturdy freemen feel,  
 Proceed with wisdom-tempered zeal,  
 And on Extortion set your heel.

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## A CORPORATION BOARDING- HOUSE KEEPER.

I'll now describe a sly old gent,  
 Tall, spider-legged and slim,  
 In crooked arts to circumvent,  
 None get ahead of him.

His beak is hooked, his face is calm,  
 His eye is cold and keen,  
 And, with a basket on his arm,  
 At market can be seen.

A Corporation boarding-house  
 He and his consort keep,  
 And as they are extremely close  
 They buy provisions cheap.

He wanders round the cellars where  
 The poorer dealers keep  
 Supplies of meat which taint the air,  
 And can be purchased cheap.

His meat selected to his mind,  
 He then will stroll around  
 The butter-kegs until he find  
 The worst that can be found.

And when he tastes what's very cheap,  
 He smacks his lips with glee,  
 While nose and chin together leap  
 And snap in ecstasy.

In soups, mince-pies and mutton hash  
 He makes his boarders pay  
 For odds and ends and other trash  
 Which butchers throw away.

Stale beef, half decomposed, he'll mix  
 With chemicals and spice,  
 And with such art his hash can fix  
 His boarders think it nice.

It seems almost a paradox  
    How this old gent can take  
The neck of an old working-ox  
    And fix it up like steak.

And thus his shams appear so real  
    That few his methods question,  
Although his boarders often feel  
    The pains of indigestion.









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